

## Today's News - Wednesday, May 5, 2010

- Minton takes on "Tesco Towns" and wonders: "How has this absurd approach to development been allowed to take root?" (CABE thinks it's a lousy idea, too).
- Add to that, U.K. developers should be wary of new court ruling that says any open space used regularly by locals could be declared a "village green."
- Q&A with Kunstler: "we've reached the end of the project called Suburbia. From now on, the New Urbanism will be the only urbanism" (there's "no low-hanging fruit in his worldview").
- Q&A with landscape architect Gustafson on civic and cultural spaces: "What is important about urban parks is that they are the only way to stop urban sprawl."
- New Moscow General Plan called by some "a death sentence to Moscow"; the mayor thinks it wasn't "properly presented" to the public, and blamed reporters" (that figures).
- Seattle architect Silk makes the case for revivalist architecture in Pioneer Square: "it's time to ditch Modernism and mesh with the neighborhood's historical style."
- The APA wanted to give Boston's Back Bay an award for being one of America's great neighborhoods, but the neighborhood association eviscerated the idea (huh?!?!?).
- Nigerian architects decry foreign competition; NIA intends to improve architectural training so local architects will among the 20 world best by the year 2020.
- Berlin's new "Topography of Terror" exhibition center "manages to point at a dark period of history without prettying it up...an anti-monument of sorts."
- Meanwhile, Eisenman's Holocaust memorial marks 5th anniversary; he thinks it should be expanded, but his idea was rejected.
- The money comes through for controversial - but "shovel ready" - expansion plans for Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art (great fly-through).
- In the U.K., there's "a revolution afoot in school design."
- Saunders bemoans the lack of long-form criticism in a world where "architects subsist on tossed-off tweets, sound bites, and glib, gnomonic generalizing."
- Have no fear - Longform.org is here "Johnny Appleseed-ing the Web" with links to long-form journalistic endeavors (nothing on architecture - yet, but we can hope!).
- A new university in Saudi Arabia uses "knock-your-socks-off architecture" with "hopes to lure the world's brainiest scientists to this Xanadu for nerds" (never mind they don't bother to mention the architect, but we know it's HOK).
- Walker's first in a 3-parter on the Biomimicry Institute/Designers Accord Challenge, What Would You Ask Nature?: first up - fungi used to reimagine sustainable neighborhoods.
- Carrión steps down as Obama's urban czar to take on "a lesser job with HUD" (well, at least he'll back in his old nabe).
- Sejima announces the theme for her Venice Biennale: "People Meet in Architecture" (and a whole lotta programs).
- Call for entries: Evergreen Awards 2010 for excellence in building design and environmental performance (U.S., Canada, Mexico).

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'This town has been sold to Tesco': Are towns built by the UK's leading supermarket the future of urban development?...How has this absurd approach to development – an anathema in mainland Europe – been allowed to take root? By Anna Minton - Guardian (UK)

United Kingdom: Developers: Beware Open Spaces: ...should be wary of a recent decision of the Supreme Court...any open space, which has been used by the local inhabitants for activities such as dog walking and playing with their children, may (if used for the requisite period of time) be the subject of a successful village green application. - Mondaq (UK)

Subdivided: Q&A with James Howard Kunstler: ...outspoken - and some would say - angry critic of the status quo...warns against relying on "technofixes"...to meet our mushrooming energy demands...There is no low-hanging fruit in [his] worldview..."we've reached the end of the project called Suburbia...From now on, the New Urbanism will be the only urbanism" - Sustainable Industries Journal

Interview with Kathryn Gustafson on Her Civic and Cultural Spaces: How do you sell the environmental, economic, and social benefits to local policy makers who may not want to invest the funds needed for urban parks? "What is important about urban parks is that they are the only way to stop urban sprawl." -- Gustafson Guthrie Nichol; Freelon Adjaye Bond/SmithGroup; Foster + Partners; George Sexton [images, links] - The Dirt/American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)

Legislators to review final reading of Moscow General Plan: The Public Chamber...is categorically opposed to the document...[it] "causes harm and infringes upon citizens' rights, and is a death sentence to Moscow"...Moscow mayor believes [it] was not "properly presented" to the public, and blamed reporters. - ITAR-TASS (Russia)

Op-Ed: The case for revivalist architecture in Pioneer Square: With a number of large sites waiting to be developed, it's time to ditch Modernism and mesh with the neighborhood's historical style...Unfortunately..."revivalist" architecture has provoked disapproval from many practicing architects and preservationists... By Stuart Silk - Crosscut (Seattle)

Spoiling for a fight: A call came into City Hall...inviting Boston officials to nominate the Back Bay for a prestigious designation as one of America's great neighborhoods...Boston Redevelopment Authority...reached out to the Back Bay Association...Oil and water have more in common than these two groups...NABB officials sent a letter to the APA last week eviscerating the idea. -- American Planning Association - Boston Globe

Nigerian Institute of Architects Decry Infiltration of Foreign Firms: ...to make Nigerian architects more competitive in the face foreign competition...architectural training would be improved in all schools offering architecture in Nigeria...NIA is positioning Nigerian architects to be among the 20 world best by the year 2020... -- Tunji Bolu - Daily Trust (Nigeria)

How to Build a Monument to Nazi Evil Without Celebrating It: Berlin's new "Topography of Terror" exhibition center documents, doesn't

honor, the Gestapo and the SS...manages to point at a dark period of history without prettying it up...an anti-monument of sorts...it exists for the sake of remembering. -- Ursula Wilms/Heinle, Wischer und Partner [images, links]- Fast Company

Adventure Playground: John V. Lindsay and the Transformation of Modern New York  
Museum of the City of New York, America's Mayor: John V. Lindsay and the Reinvention of New York.

By James Sanders - Places Journal

Germany's Holocaust memorial marks 5th anniversary: ...now one of the capital's top 10 tourist attractions...Peter Eisenman...called for an extension of the monument and the documentation center. "I realize it's too small now"...memorial's fundraising group rejected the idea...- Washington Post

Museum of Contemporary Art \$53m extension to start in weeks: The money has come through and the controversial plans are "shovel ready"...the redevelopment would "allow the MCA to stand alongside the world's greatest museums"... -- Sam Marshall/Architect Marshall [video fly-through]- Sydney Morning Herald

The future of schools: Riotously colourful atriums? Dining halls 'cool enough to chill in'? There's a revolution afoot in school design...while the politicians continue to bicker over the old issues...there is one thing that has been proved to make a profound difference to pupils' grades: the physical design of the building. -- De Rijke Marsh Morgan (dRMM); Wilkinson Eyre; John Waldron [images]- Telegraph (UK)

Comment: Hasty Habits of Mind: Architects subsist on tossed-off tweets, sound bites, and glib, gnomic generalizing...To whom have we been able to turn for high standards and fearless iconoclasm? By William S. Saunders -- Sorkin; Huxtable;? Sylvia Lavin; Jeff Kipnis; Barry Bergdoll; Rem Koolhaas - The Architect's Newspaper

Linsky and Lammer Love Long-Form: Two writers curate a Web site devoted to feature-length journalism. - Slate

Saudi School Aims To Save The Planet: King Abdullah University of Science and Technology...With a private Red Sea beach, knock-your-socks-off architecture and world-class labs, KAUST hopes to lure the world's brainiest scientists to this Xanadu for nerds. -- HOK - National Public Radio (NPR)

Biomimicry Challenge: TOA Uses Fungi to Reimagine Sustainable Neighborhoods: Biomimicry Institute/Designers Accord Challenge "What Would You Ask Nature?" assigned three challenges to three firms and paired them each with a biologist. For the next three weeks, each team will be reporting their bio-inspired solutions. By Alissa Walker -- Taller de Operaciones Ambientales [images, videos]- Fast Company

Adolfo Carrión stepping down as President Obama's urban czar for lesser job with HUD [Department of Housing and Urban Development]...will take over the department's Region II, which runs federal housing operations in New York and New Jersey.- NY Daily News

Kazuyo Sejima Presented the 12th Biennale of Architecture: ...titled "People Meet in Architecture"...Two major projects will be developed: the Architecture Saturdays (a series of conversations, performances and weekly discussions with architects and critics) and the greater involvement of the Universities (educational opportunities for students). -- SANAA- ArtDaily.org

Call for entries: Evergreen Awards 2010 for excellence in building design and environmental performance (U.S., Canada, Mexico); registration deadline: July 1 - Eco-Structure magazine

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